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ARMENIAN KINGDOM
OF CILICIA

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The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia

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Volume I. History

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The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia*

BY VAHAN M. KURKJIAN

On the 10th day of November, 1918, a French squadron entered and occupied the port of Alexandretta. The event was joyfully hailed by the Armenians throughout the world as the realization of a dream five centuries old.

The port of Alexandretta was within the boundaries of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. After having been lost, for a short period, to the Mameluke Sultans of Egypt, it was recovered by King Constantine II in 1347, with the assistance of the Knights Hospitallers. The Egyptian armies reappeared a quarter of a century later, swept the whole country, destroyed the last stronghold of Christianity in the East, and carried away the King, Leon V, to Egypt. Released from his captivity after eight years, the unfortunate prince went to Europe, with the intention of enlisting the sympathies of the Christian world. He was accorded a hearty welcome in the court of Charles VI of France, and a few years afterwards was delegated by Charles to England, as a messenger of peace. The Hundred Years' war was then being waged, and the Armenian King cherished the hope of bringing about a cessation of hostilities between these two greatest powers of Europe, and, eventually, of securing their help for the deliverance of his enslaved fellow-countrymen and the restoration of his throne. In a pathetic address, Leon depicted before Richard II and his Parliament at Westmin-

*Northern Cilicia became the first Asian home of the Armenians, after they left their original habitat in Thrace, Southeastern Europe, about 1300 years B. C. Cilicia became the last stronghold of Armenian Independence, from 1080 to 1375, when it was known as the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, or the Kingdom of Lesser Armenia. Cilicia has an area of about 18,000 square miles, and includes the major portion of the Province of Adana, and about 6,900 square miles in the Northwestern corner of the Province of Aleppo. Its Mediterranean Coast extends from a point West of Selefkeh to a point East of Alexandretta.

ster the distressing picture of the Christians of the East, and concluded as follows: "The hostility between England and France has continued too long. Both should be urged to be contented with their vast dominions and put an end to this struggle, so that they may be able to drive away the enemies of Christ, and to break the yoke of the Christians of the East, who are daily awaiting your assistance, O, illustrious princes!"

The address made a profound impression upon the august assembly, and the King consented to the postponement of hostile operations as requested by his "cousin," the King of Armenia—"nostre cousyn le roy d'Armenye." But, unfortunately, the fire of mutual hatred was too intense to be extinguished so quickly; no agreement on peace preliminaries could be reached, and Leon, disappointed in his labors and expectations, returned to Paris, there to descend into his grave on the 29th of November, 1393.

The last Armenian King passed away, but the Armenian nation has ever since clung tenaciously to the hope that the Christian powers of Europe, and especially England and France, would at last come to their rescue. It is only natural, therefore, that the heart of every Armenian should be thrilled by the news of the redemption of the ancient port of Armenia, through the Anglo-French Alliance.

The term "Armenia" is generally applied to the region about the Ararat mountains and the upper valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris, but historically, politically and ethnographically it comprises an area which stretches to the western Taurus chains and to the northeastern shores of the Mediterranean; and it is a matter of fundamental justice and of a vital importance to the cause of civilization that this part of the Mediterranean coastland should be included and incorporated in the new Armenian State.

The two sections of Southeastern Asia Minor, respectively known in the Fourth Century as Cilicia and Euphratensis, and colonized by Armenians long ago, became, on the decline of Byzantine influence, after the advent of the Saracens, dominant Armenian centers.* It is interesting to

*Arab historians say that the Armenians of the beautiful city of Halal transferred their residence to Sis in 809. According to native historians fifty Armenian chiefs immigrated to Cilicia from Sassoun in 900.

know in this same connection that the northern slopes of the Taurus range, the territory adjoining Cilicia and designated in the geography of Moses of Khoren as the First Armenia (Arachin Haik) was an original seat from which the Armenians proceeded towards Ararat in their eastward movement from Thrace and Hellespontes about 1000 years before Christ.

After the short-lived Empire of Tigranes the Great, who had occupied the territory in 69 B. C., Cilician ports became more and more freely accessible to the Armenians. Most significant is the allusion to the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean as the "Armenian Gulf" (Sinus Armenicus) by Ammianus Marcellus, the Latin historian of the Fourth Century. It was in the second half of the same century that St. John the Chrysostom, writing from his place of exile at Cocussus, the present village of Goksun between Hajin and Zeitoun, expressed gratitude for the kindness extended to him by the Armenian population of the locality and by the Armenian nobleman, Dioscorus. Bishop Melitus of Antioch, whose pupil Chrysostom had been, was himself an Armenian. According to Theodoret, who lived in the Fifth Century, the city of Cocussus was in Armenia. The Armenians of those parts had grown so numerous in the Sixth Century that Catholicus Christopher took special care to warn them against the teachings of Nestorius. During the Eleventh Century almost the whole province was governed by Armenian functionaries or feudal lords; such as General Hachadour at Issaurian-Antioch, Oshin at Lambron, Abligarib at Tarsus, Halgam on the western coastlands, Pazoûni in the highlands, Tatoul at Marash, etc. More extensive and almost independent was the land of Cogh Vassil, the Covasilio of the Western chroniclers, comprising the whole territory between the Amanus mountains and the Euphrates—Kessun, Husnimansour, Raban, Telbashar, Aintab, etc. Most of these domains were soon assimilated in the Armenian principality of Cilicia, which was founded by Roupen in 1080, just 35 years after the fall of the Kingdom of Ani, in Armenia Major. Constantine, successor of Roupen, and other Armenian chiefs extended a hearty welcome to the first Crusaders on their way to the Holy Land in 1098, helped them with supplies and co-operated with them in their fight against the Moslems. This loyalty to the Christians of the West, zealously maintained by the succeeding rulers of the Armenian

Principality, was finally rewarded by the Emperor Henry IV, with the bestowal of the kingly title and crown upon the Prince Leon II (King Leon I), 1199. Alexis Angelus, the Byzantine emperor, had anticipated him by conferring kingship upon Leon in 1196.

This Leon, the Magnificent, is a great figure in Armenian history. An able soldier and tactful diplomat, he greatly extended the boundaries and the economic and political strength of the Armenian State. His name kept the surrounding Moslem nations at a respectful distance. He defied even the great Saladin. Leon was a personal friend of Richard the Lion-Hearted, and an ally in his campaign against Kyr-Isaac at Cyprus. A few months after he had acted as groomsman at Richard's marriage with the Princess Berengaria, he took part in the siege of Acre, on the Syrian coast, conducted by the English and French forces in 1191. In an old German poem, dedicated to the glories of the leaders of this campaign, we read:

Kunic Leon von Ubia (Roubinian?)
Ouch der von Armenia.

Cilician Armenia made great strides in the paths of commerce, trade and agriculture under Leon's rule. The population of the country, originally composed of Armenians, Greeks and Syrians, was rapidly increased in numbers not only by Armenians who hailed from the various parts of the Near East, and who came to live under the shelter of their national flag, but also by European colonists of Syria and Palestine, whose position had become precarious on account of the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187. Even Turkish chieftains declared allegiance to the Armenian King in whose justice and generosity they placed perfect confidence.* The progress and prosperity of the country were greatly enhanced by the special privileges granted by Leon to the mercantile nations of Southern Europe by which they

*We have the testimony of Ibn-el-Bibi, the historian of the Turkish Seljuk dynasty, that Sultan Keykaous of Cesarea, on one occasion promised to Leon by oath and in writing "never again to attack the Armenian forts, and also to send a provision of 12,000 measures (medd) of wheat to Armenistan (Armenia)."

were induced and encouraged to send agents and colonists to the Armenian State for financial, commercial and industrial enterprises. The political organization, the various departments of administration and the royal court were modeled after those of Europe; intermarriage between Armenian and European princely houses were frequent, and institutions of learning under the native clergy and Latin religious orders were established in many localities.* As a consequence of these activities, connections, and reforms, and because of its rich natural resources, the country soon flourished "paradise-like," to use the expression of Vahram, a contemporary poet-historian. Sis, the capital, was embellished with palaces, public and private buildings, hospitals and orchards.† Magnificent churches were erected for the different nationalities and creeds of the city—for the Armenians, Greeks, Franks, Genoese, Venetians, Georgians and Syrians. Canon Willebrand of Oldenbourg, who visited Sis in 1211, describes it as "the residence of innumerable and wealthy inhabitants." The hymnology of the Roman Catholic Church refers to this city as "Sis Christianorum."

Most wonderful was the part played in the life of the little kingdom, by the port of Ayas. Situated a few miles west of the modern town of Youmurtalik, on the western shores of the Armenian Gulf almost facing Alexandretta, Ayas became a thriving emporium, where were exchanged the wares and merchandise of the West and the East. There was a time lasting about a hundred years, when all the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean coast was under Moslem domination, and, therefore, dreaded or tabooed by European vessels. Then the overland routes of the Asiatic world could

*Almost all the queens of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem were Armenians. Arta, the daughter of Thoros I, married Baudouin I, the first king of Jerusalem. Marcile, the daughter of Prince Gabriel of Malatia, married Baudouin de Bourg. Melissanth, their eldest daughter, became the Queen-Regent of her son Baudouin III. Rita, the daughter of Leon I, married Jean de Brienne, the titular King of Jerusalem. On the other hand, many of the Armenian kings had married European princesses.

†Queen Zabelle used to attend the sick in the hospital founded by herself in 1214.

be reached only through the safe haven of Ayas—the “Portus Ayacii, Domini Regis Ermenie.”*

Says Marco Polo, the Venetian traveler, who started from Ayas in 1271 for his journey to China:

“The Armenians have a city on the sea, which is called Layas, where a great trade is carried on. Because, you must know, all sorts of spices, silken and gold-braided goods and other precious wares are brought from the interior to this city. The merchants of Venice and Genoa and other countries come to this place to sell and to buy goods. And whoever wishes to travel to the East, be he merchant or otherwise, sets out from this city of Layas.”

Previously, in 1269, Marco Polo’s uncle had sailed from Ayas to Acre on an *Armenian vessel*.

The immense importance which Ayas attained as a commercial and political base of operation was looked upon as a peril by the Moslem nations of the period, and especially by the Sultans of Egypt; they determined to capture that city, to destroy the Armenian kingdom, and thereby to wipe out all Christian influence in the East.†

It is impossible to read without the deepest emotion, the annals of the bitter struggle waged by the Armenians,

*Ayas was favored also by its geographical position. The Armenian Gulf, about forty-five miles long and about twenty-five miles wide, is protected against the winds by the encircling mountains. For many years past, this gulf has served as a winter shelter to the British Squadron of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Ayas is mentioned as Leyyes in the “Canterbury Tales” of Chaucer.

The Treasury of the kingdom received enormous sums of money from duties imposed upon the importations and exportations. Otherwise it would have been impossible to carry on the incessant wars against the enemies, and to reconstruct the country after so many incursions. The Custom House of Ayas was called “Pajdoun” by Armenians or “Pasidonium” by Europeans.

†Merchants came to Ayas from the following cities and countries: Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Pavia, Mantua, Livorno, Florence, Spain, Catalonia, Sicily, Barcelona, Saragossa, Marseilles, Provence, Nîmes, Narbonne, Montpellier, Constantinople, Trebizond, Egypt, Syria.

There are documents concerning commercial relations between Flemish countries and Armenia.

Armenian merchants were established in Europe, chiefly in Italy and France. Thirty-six Italian cities had Armenian centers or hostelries (Hay-doun).

from the second half of the Thirteenth Century to the end of the Fourteenth, against the Egyptian armies and the Seljuk and Turkoman hordes. The nations of the West displayed much concern about Armenia; the Roman See was particularly solicitous about her fate; men like Marino Sanuto—the Italian diplomat and traveler—sounded the alarm in her behalf, but no practical step was taken beyond the expressions of sympathy, which, in fact, were productive of more harm than good. The situation may be best realized by the following lines from Rainaldi: “While these peoples (the Europeans) were fighting with the heathen by wishes and writings only, they (the Egyptians) were destroying Armenia by sword and fire; while the King of France (Philip of Valois) was thundering his threats in the West, and while preachers proclaimed the rewards of the Crusader, the infidels on the other side, irritated by reports of enormous preparations, were falling upon the Christians with all their might.”

The Armenians were left to themselves, indeed, but they did not lose heart. Their warriors bravely faced terrible odds and their leaders steered the bark of State with great sagacity. Students of the history of the Crusaders give credit to Armenian diplomacy for securing the good-will of the Tartar Emperors of the age. The Tartars emerging from Central Asia and spreading toward the West, bitterly contested with the Sultans of Egypt the supremacy in the Near East, and the custody of Mediterranean ports. The Christian powers heartily welcomed the appearance of the Tartars, as a rival of their own formidable foe, saw in him a prospective ally, and endeavored to cultivate friendly relations with him. This disposition met a ready response from the Tartar Khans, who, though Buddhists by faith, were not really interested in religion, but were shrewd enough to pretend to an inclination toward Christianity. Accordingly their Generals occasionally attended Christian ceremonies, permitted Christian clergy to conduct services for the Christian soldiers of their army, and themselves took Christian women in marriage. The missionaries of Islam were more successful, however, and the Tartars finally adopted the religion of Mohammed to the bitter disappointment of the Europeans and Armenians. But even then the Khans tried to win the nations of the West to their side. Speaking of Ghazan,

who had embraced the Moslem faith, Michaud, the well-known historian, says:

"It is surprising indeed to see that a Mongol Emperor should strive to fan the crusading spirit among the princes of the Christian world. It is surprising to see that barbarians, from the banks of the Jaxartes and the Oxus rivers, should stand on Golgotha and Zion, awaiting for the troops of France, Germany and Italy to come to fight the enemies of Christianity."

That, Ghazan Khan, thought converted to Islam, was really prompted by political motives only, may be proved by the following lines addressed to him by Sultan Nassir of Egypt:

"The Apostle of God has said that he is a Moslem whose hands and tongue never harm others. Thou hast harshly treated Moslem prisoners and delivered them to the *Tacavor** and to the Armenians. This is against the spirit of charity, which thou claimest to possess."

It is evident that the Armenians were deeply interested in the creation of an entente between the Tartars and the European powers, and that they earnestly strove to achieve that end.† Simpad, the Constable or Commander-in-chief of Armenia, and later King Hethoum I himself, personally repaired to the court of Mangou Khan with the object of securing his friendship for the Armenians, and of laying the foundation of a future alliance between the Tartars and Europeans.‡ The policy of Hethoum and his successors,

**Tacavor* means King in the Armenian language. The reference here is to King Hethoum II, who had entered Damascus and Jerusalem as an ally of Ghazan in 1300.

†Simon, an Assyrian priest, came to Sis in 1243, as an envoy from the Khan of the Tartars.

Abagha Khan, writing to European powers in 1269, requested them to concentrate their forces in Sis.

‡We have a precious document in the letter written by Simpad to his sister, the consort of the King of Cyprus, from Samarcand, dated Feb. 6th, 1248. The letter is addressed as follows: "A tres haut et puissant homme Monseigneur Henry, par la grace de Die roy de Chipre, et a sa chiere suer Emmeline la royne, et a noble homme Jehan de Hibelin son frere, li Connoitables de Ermenie salut et amour."

Half a century later, in 1301, Hethoum of Gorigos, the Monk-Prince, personally offered to the Pope, Clement V, a book written by himself about Tartary, under the following title: "Le livre de la fleur des histoires de la terre d'Orient. Le quel livre Hayton Seigneur de Corc, cousin germain du roy de Armenie compilla."

though it greatly helped in the protection of the Christians of Asia and the defense of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, was not crowned with an enduring success. After a series of victorious campaigns in Syria and Palestine, in which the Armenian troops under Leon II and Hethoum II took part (1277 and 1300), the Mongol-Tartars gradually declined in power and lost their interest in Armenians. The European nations on the other hand, always divided by mutual jealousies and more mindful of their own selfish ends than of their moral obligations, did practically nothing in response to the distressing cries of Armenia. And while the churches and the monasteries of this unhappy land were given over to fire and destruction, and while Christian blood was flowing in torrents, Latin missionaries were eagerly trying to purge the Armenian Church of heretical doctrines and teachings. A fund of 30,000 florins (\$72,000) sent by Pope John XXII in 1334, for the reconstruction of Ayas, after a destructive attack by the Egyptians, was held back by the Papal Legate, pending the settlement of certain theological controversies.

The Armenians might, even at that late hour, have insured the safety of their country had they consented to break with the Western world, and to "cease sending envoys or letters to the Roman Pontif," as was stipulated in a treaty forced upon Leon IV by Sultan Nassir.* But that was an

*Baghdin of Nigher and Abbot Thoros of Trazarg, the special envoys from King Oshin, were received by King Edward I of England in 1317.

Bishop Hagop of Gaban and his interpreter Baron Krikor were sent to Europe at a later date to plead the cause of Armenia.

The kings of France, Navarre, Aragon and Bohemia had promised in 1333 to join in an expedition to the East to help Armenia against the Moslems.

Edward III of England wrote to Leon IV in 1342, expressing his sympathy and promising his aid.

The following is part of the decree of Philip directing his Treasurers to send to Armenia the sum of 10,000 Florins for relief work. This sum was to be sent in three yearly installments.

"Philippe par la grace de Dieu, roy de France, a nos ames et feaus les gens de nos Comptes et nos Tresoriers a Paris, salut et diliction. Pour ce que nostre tres chier cousin le Roy d'Armenie nous a signifie que les Sarasins de par de la le guerroyoient efforcement, nous voulous le faire aide, pour ce qu'il puisse mieus garder ses chastieux et son pays, et resister aus dis Sarasins si que le dict pays d'Armenie, qui est pays convenable, si comme l'on dit, a recevoir nous et nos gens, si nous y transporterons pour le

impossibility. Whatever the exigencies of their geographical position and their political isolation may have been the Armenians cherished an indomitable loyalty to Christian ideals and traditions; so they kept up the fight until, bled white and utterly exhausted, they fell on the field of honor.

That this last episode in the story of independent Armenia is full of romance is admitted by those who have studied its history. Its existence, not more than 300 years, although not much longer than that of some of its contemporary neighboring States, was equalled only by the Island Kingdom of Cyprus.* But comparatively short though its duration was, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, this Christian islet in a stormy Moslem ocean was the scene of many an act of valor and chivalry. The crisis was reached during the second half of the Fourteenth Century, when all vestiges of European dominion in the Levant had vanished by the fall, one after another, of Acre, Tyre and Tripoli before the mighty power of Sultan Ashraf Kalavoun. The Armenians had, therefore, to face the situation single-handed. And they did full justice to their reputation as good soldiers. They performed in that hour of sacrifice many supremely heroic exploits, thereby prolonging their national independence. The Armenian garrison of Ayas, 600 strong, twice repulsed the army of Sultan Nassir. On another occasion 200 Armenian warriors, in charge of the defence of a defile in the Amanus, entrapped 18,000 Moslem cavalymen and put 6,000 of them out of action. Those were the days of Libarid, whose name spread terror among the marauding Turks and Turkomans, and of Zarmantoukht, the heroine, who with her own hands slew two Turkish generals: Omar in the plains of Odana and Oli in the plains of Sis.

Saint Voyage d'Outremer, duquel faire Dieu aydant, nous avons grant devotion et desir, soit retenu et ne puisse estre print ou greve par les Saracins mescreants; avons donne au dit Roy et donnons de grace especiale par des Lettres dize mille florins d'or de Florence, pour estre convertis en la garde de dicts chastiaux et pays. . ."

*The following list shows the duration of the States:

The Frankish Principality of Edessa 46 years; The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem 88 years; The Principality of Tripoli of Syria 180 years; The Principality of Antioch 169 years; The Principality of Accon or Acre 187 years; The Seljuk Sultanate of Roum 213 years; The Latin Empire of Constantinople 57 years; The Greek Empire of Trebizond 258 years; The Kingdom of Cyprus 295 years.

I will not go into further detail concerning the services rendered by the Armenians to the cause of Christian civilization, their unflinching loyalty to the Western Powers, and their inflexible determination to defend, to their last breath, the independence of their country. The conclusion to be derived from the manifold and touching events of that period has been thus summed up by Victor Langlois: "Numerous are those events, those brilliant traditions," he writes, "and however lamely we may follow the course of Armenia's victories and progress; however hastily we may examine the organization of her aristocracy and clergy; however slightly we may study her relations with the Western Nations, and the wars which she waged against the Moslems, still shall we see that . . . the historical documents of this country contain the memories of a glorious past."

Yet it is not "the glorious past" alone which gives the Armenians the strongest proof of their title to this region. The Armenians have continued to constitute, ever since the overthrow of their Kingdom of Sis, the most vital element of their invaded territory. The Egyptian conquest was neither complete nor lasting. The Western coastland was held for almost another century by the Venetians and in the uplands there arose a number of independent communities. The Ottoman Turks entered Cilicia in 1487 under Sultan Bayazid, but they could not consolidate their domination; their authority was hotly contested by the Ramazans, the Zulkadrians, the Karamans, and the Egyptians. The Ottoman dominion in this province was still unsettled as late as the middle of the Nineteenth century. One Dada Bey was holding Payas, north of Alexandretta, in 1825; Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt was in possession of Adana in 1840; Sarkhand Oglou ruled between Sis and Marash in 1859, and Kozan Oglou was supreme until 1866.

Last but not least of the free centers of Cilicia was that of the Armenian district of Zeitoun, whose semi-autonomous rights were guaranteed by the Six Powers, after its victory over the Turkish troops in 1895. A certain degree of freedom was enjoyed also by the Armenians of the Black Mountains, known by the Turks as the Ghiavour Dagh—the Infidels' Mountains.

Notwithstanding the turbulent condition of the country and the periodical outbursts of Moslem fanaticism, the Armenians maintained their predominance in the Eastern

part of Cilicia, their number there being not less than 200,000. In Cilicia as a whole the Moslems form a majority of the population, but they represent a variety of races, all alien to one another—Turkoman, Turk, Kurd, Tcherkess, Arab, Persian, etc. The Turkomans, which constitute the largest percentage of the Moslem inhabitants, are mostly nomadic tribes, such as the Varshaks, Yuruks and the Afshars. The tribes of Bozan and Hayoug are of Armenian ancestry. There are a considerable number of ostensibly Turkish families who bear Armenian names, and who are the result of forcible conversion to Mohammedanism. Many Armenian words used in the domestic life of the Turks suggest the same situation. It is a frequent practice for Turkish women to bring their sick children to the Armenian church to have the gospel read over them for their recovery; and also to send offerings to the church and to invoke the prayers of the congregation in hours of distress.

Not content with deporting and slaughtering the Armenians in these later years, the criminal government of Turkey has attempted also to wipe all evidence of Armenian activities in the past. They have demolished the Patriarchal throne, and have pillaged the treasures of the Monastery of Sis, which stands on the site of the royal palace; they have desecrated the tombs of the Armenian kings and queens; they have pulled down the remains of old princely mansions and stations. But although the Turks were able to obliterate many priceless monuments of the past ages, the memories of what Gustave Schulumberger calls the "glorious Christian kingdom of Lesser Armenia" are imperishable. There, still towering beyond the reach of the destroying Turk, their battle-scarred flanks marked with Armenian inscriptions, are many castles and fortresses. There, reduced to ruins or converted into Moslem mosques, are picturesque churches, under the vaults of which preachers (like Nerses of Lambron, the saintly Archbishop of Tarsus) held cosmopolitan congregations spell-bound with the power of their oratory. There we have monasteries, perched on the slopes, or hidden in the fastnesses of the Taurus and Amanus ranges, where the Armenian monk piously prayed for the success of the Christian armies, and assiduously copied the Bible or the works of the Ancient Fathers. And not only these, but included in numismatistic collections, are a variety of coins in silver and in gold, bearing the names of Armenian kings and

queens; and preserved in European museums and archives, are the parchments of treaties and decrees emanating from the Court of Sis.* We have, finally, the testimony of the chroniclers of the Middle Ages to the effect that this territory, once a center of Armenian life and energy, and always soaked with the blood of Armenian heroes or martyrs, was the *Armenie* of the European, the *Armenokilikia* of the Greek, the *Bilad-el-Armen* of the Arab, and the *Armenistan* of the Turk himself. . . .

May we not hope that, as one of the crowning victories of the cause of justice, and as one of the most glorious results of the coming Peace Congress, the Armenian flag will flutter once more on the topmasts of Armenian vessels which shall sail forth from what was the *Mare Armeniae*?

*The figures and inscriptions on these coins vary. Some of them have the picture of the King, or a standing lion with a cross in his hand. On the reverse side, after the name of the king, are the words: "By the power of God, King." Or: "Cast in the city of Sis, to the Glory of God."

A silver coin bears the picture of King Hethoum I and Queen Zabelle. The most common currency was the Tacavorin which was called Tacorin or Taccolino by Europeans, and Tacvourieh by the Egyptians. It was a silver piece, equivalent to about twelve cents in American money.

Armenia

(An editorial in the New York Times, February 16, 1919.)

The suggestion frequently advanced in England—most recently by Viscount Bryce—that the United States should act as mandatory of the League of Nations for Armenia will, of course, conflict with the settled opinion of most Americans that it would be better for us to keep out of those parts of the world where hitherto we have not been active. However, a principle is sometimes best recognized by being disregarded; and if this country should act under any mandate outside our own immediate neighborhood we should probably be as well satisfied to be in Armenia as anywhere. The whole matter, of course, must depend on the wish of the Armenians; but Armenia would not call for very much effort on the part of her mandatory; her people are apparently capable of self-government, their commercial and industrial ability is well known. About all that Armenia's mandatory—if she required any at all—might have to do would be to furnish what the projected constitution of the League of Nations calls "administrative advice and assistance."

But it may be doubted if Armenia, once guaranteed against a renewal of Turkish aggression, would need any mandatory at all. No higher tribute could be paid to the Armenians than the willingness of the present Greek Government to have the Greeks of Pontus, geographically hard to include in the Greek State, attached to an independent Armenia. Armenian estimates would indicate that their race still consists of some three million people, after all the massacres; and of those who live in Constantinople, or elsewhere outside the contiguous Armenian territory till lately under the sovereignty of Russia, Persia, and Turkey, many will doubtless go back to help the nation rebuild its home. Inasmuch as the Armenians furnished many of the ablest administrators and statesmen of the Ottoman Empire, in view of the executive capacity which Armenians have displayed in foreign countries where their abilities were given

free rein, it would be rash to say that Armenia is not even now capable of full self-government. *"One thing is to be made secure—that there is to be no Armenian irredenta, in so far as the overlapping of populations may make it possible. Armenia has earned the right to full national liberty. According to the last Turkish statistics, nearly 30 per cent. of the Armenians of the empire, outside of Constantinople, lived in Cilicia, on the Mediterranean. Cilicia is within the sphere of influence allotted to France by the treaties of 1916, but French economic interest could be guaranteed without interfering with the political sovereignty of the Armenians in Armenian territory."*

The Christian Powers of the world are in duty bound to remember that most of the misfortunes which afflicted the Armenian people in the nineteenth century were due to the remissness of these very Powers, who time and time again were willing to accept Turkish promises of better administration, and never took effective steps to enforce performance of these promises. The Armenians were mistreated chiefly because they were Christians and held to their religion inflexibly, incidentally because they were economically superior to the Turks and dangerous to the Germans. A nation that has been sacrificed for the faith and the civilization of Europe should not again be betrayed, in whole or in part, by Europe and America. The present Turkish Government has lately begun prosecution of one or two officials in the evident hope of blaming the Armenian massacres on minor personages who can be sacrificed in place of the men higher up. Any real fixing of responsibility will go to persons very high up, in Constantinople and Berlin; and justice to Armenia includes the punishment of guilt in the past as well as real and trustworthy guarantees for the future. Armenia is as much a moral test of the Peace Conference as is Belgium.





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